

# BRIDGE

Stockbridge  
Church

STOCKBRIDGE CHURCH MAGAZINE

[www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk](http://www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk)

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## **Our Mission Statement**

Being aware of the love of God in our lives, we, the congregation of Stockbridge Parish Church, as part of the world church seek to meet together in worship; to demonstrate faith in God in our everyday lives; to reach out to others, showing God's love and compassion; and to raise awareness of matters of justice locally and globally.

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The church office is open Monday – Friday, 10am - 3:30pm

# Church News

## Baptisms

Back in March, Helena MacKenzie was baptised into the church. She is pictured below with her mother Heather, her grandmother, and her Godparents.



## Christian Aid

£924 was raised for Christian Aid at Stockbridge Church during Christian Aid Week. Elspeth Porter won the famous Scots quiz, Violet Hogg won the towns quiz, and Chris Morison won the photo competition.



## Granton Goes Greener

As part of our ongoing ecumenical work, Granton Goes Greener – based at Granton Parish Church – was at Number 7 for the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June.

Granton Goes Greener is an initiative which funds free clothing, sewing classes, and more.

We received the following from Granton following the weekend:

“We want to say a **huge thank you** to you, your wonderful volunteers, and your church community for letting us use Number 7 over the weekend.

We had a great mix of visitors — tourists, students, local residents, and several members of your own congregation who were curious about GGG. We were also delighted to welcome an Edinburgh-based storyteller, who selected some costumes and accessories for an upcoming show, and even Edinburgh’s oldest book fairy popped in for a visit.”



## Upcoming Picnic

Join us to have a picnic in Sundial Garden in Inverleith Park as part of Stockbridge & Comely Bank Churches Together.

BYO food and drink to share.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Aug 1-3pm**



**Church of Scotland General Assembly  
15 - 18 May 2026**

King Charles called for Christians to be a unifying force - drawing on heritage to face modern challenges.

Rev Dr John McPake was formally appointed as the Church's new Principal Clerk

Throughout the Assembly, emphasis was placed on community - both in terms of ecumenical links and the way congregations and volunteers nourish their communities through service, care and compassion.

Commissioners heard a passionate call for courage and growth rather than decline management. Members were encouraged to embrace change, rebuild confidence in sharing the Gospel, and seek fresh opportunities for ministry and outreach.

The Church of Scotland Guild raised more than £224,000 for charitable causes over the past year.

CrossReach was praised for demonstrating the Church "at its best" through practical care and compassion

Military chaplains were recognised for their essential role in supporting the spiritual resilience and wellbeing of service personnel and their families.





It was agreed to lease the Scots Hotel in Tiberias in the Holy Land to a third-party operator

Members approved plans for a new lead academic partnership to support ministerial training and theological education

The Church formally apologised for its historic links with slavery. In a deeply reflective debate, commissioners acknowledged the suffering caused by slavery and recognised that some within the Church had historically benefited from or justified the practice.



Mrs Rose Wedderburn, General Secretary of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, responds to the apology.

The Assembly committed itself to truth-telling, repentance and a renewed pursuit of justice and reconciliation.

There was a call for congregations to welcome refugees and asylum seekers with compassion and hospitality.

Commissioners heard calls for a more streamlined and strategic approach to preserving historic church buildings.

## → Legacies of Slavery

In **2023**, the General Assembly received and approved a report outlining the Church of Scotland's legacies of slavery to date. It focused on **three questions**:

→ What **physical evidence** remains in Church of Scotland buildings today that reveals involvement in the transatlantic slave trade?

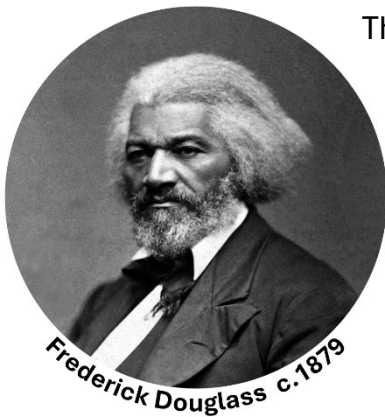
→ To what extent did the Church of Scotland benefit both **directly and indirectly** from the profits from transatlantic slavery?

→ What is the **cultural legacy of slavery** in the Church today?

The report itself is freely available on the Church of Scotland website – and covers context, methodology, findings, and proposed future actions. It is an interesting, reflective, and thought provoking read – but clocking in at **11,128** words, it is not the most accessible. Here are some key aspects from the report to help you contextualise and understand the apology received at this year’s General Assembly:

## The History

In 1846, New College opened its doors as a training college for ministers of the newly seceded Free Church of Scotland. This same year, a trio of American abolitionists arrived in Britain – including Frederick Douglass – a self-liberated former slave.



This was initiated as two years earlier, a deputation was sent by the Free Church of Scotland to the USA to raise support and monies. These monies included the sum of £3000 from southern congregations who admitted slave owners into their fellowship.

Douglass called for this money to be returned, as slavery and Christianity are incompatible.

In response, Free Church Minister John McNaughton

**“Send back to  
America, that blood  
stained money”**

- Douglass

stated that the abolitionists' demand was both impractical and hypocritical – that is the money is to be returned, then “We must not buy [American] cotton, nor wear it, we must not use their rice nor purchase their tobacco, [for] the stamp of slavery is on them all.” (Quoted in Murray 2023).

The position of the Church has changed since this quote, with several deliverances passed and reports received by the General Assembly on racism and racial justice.



**2005**

Recognition of racism in Scottish society, a call for education, and for support for racial justice. Racial Justice Sunday (second Sunday of February) is introduced.



**2011**

‘One Scotland Many Cultures’ introduced.

Focus on the eradication of racist views, prejudice, and discrimination in Scotland with prayers and actions for racial justice.

“We need to ask how our culture fits in with a diverse and changing Scotland” - “Continuing to offer Jesus’ radical hospitality must remain one of our core principles.”



**2013**

Deliverance: Reject racism and religious hatred and condemn antisemitism and Islamophobia.



**2020**

The General Assembly reaffirmed that racism is a sin and declared Black Lives Matter, and for the first time the legacy of slavery was linked with racial justice issues

Nonetheless, it is undeniable that the transatlantic slave trade was a sheer horror, and the effects of it are still being felt today – from racist behaviours stemming from ideas and beliefs used to justify the transatlantic slave trade, through to the significant income gap between African nations and the rest of the world (Nunn 2008).

## The Research

In 2021, the Church of Scotland Legacies of Slavery Project Group (LoSPG). This group consisted of staff from the Faith Action Programme, General Trustees, and the Convenor of the EDI Group. The LoSPG was joined by representatives from the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago and the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria in November 2021. Between April and September 2022, an MSc Heritage student from the University of Stirling who carried out targeted research with two churches in Inverclyde.

The research set out to see if legacies of slavery, primarily within church buildings, can be barriers to inclusion.

Over 18 months, the group examined Scottish heritage sources, historic and archival records, and published academic texts and databases, and between August and September 2022, a questionnaire on church history and architecture was distributed to each Presbytery in Scotland to be forwarded to every congregation.

## The Findings

The Church of Scotland was found to have a presence across numerous countries, with the largest being in Guyana and Jamaica.

In Guyana, a wide number of enslaved people were married and baptised by Rev Archibald Browne – he was in post when the 1823 Demerara uprising broke out and wrote an article for the pro-slavery Glasgow Courier criticising the role of the London Missionary Society in the uprising. He also published three sermons, later serialised in the Courier, entitled “On the Duties of Subjects to their Sovereign and the Duties of Slaves to their Masters”.

Another clergyman, Rev James Struthers is recorded in the registers of the Slave Compensation Commission – though the extent of his compensation or slave ownership is unknown. He is not alone in this, as a number of folks involved with the Church of Scotland are named in UCL’s register of British slave ownership and involvement in the Caribbean.

This is also not just linked to monetary means. Over in Jamaica, slave owners were encouraged to baptise and instruct slaves into the Christian faith under ‘Code Noir’ (1696), but many denied this as they felt the message of freedom in Christ would encourage them to challenge their enslavement.

When it comes to the General Assembly, there were many anti-slavery petitions promoted by presbyteries and synods, and individual ministers who played key roles in anti-slavery campaigns – but there are no records that the General Assembly ever petitioned parliament on transatlantic slavery.

As well as this, the buildings of the Church were also found to have legacies of slavery – through buildings and fabric being funded by monies raised from slavery or being imported from plantations, being places of worship for those associated with slavery, or having monuments for these people, among others.

Finally, there is the land owned by the Church, and land that churches are currently built on. Profits from slavery often financed large scale land purchases, especially in the Highlands and Islands during the early-to-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Whats next?

Zuliani (2022) recommends a model of understanding, engaging and managing.

**Understanding** what is known about slavery within the Church and acknowledging the differing moral context between the present day and of the past period.

**Engaging congregations** to ask what the history means for them, what needs to be told and why it is important to tell this, what still speaks to us today, and the purpose of any objects linked to slavery in the church.

Finally, **managing for future uses** – How do we share what we know today so it isn't forgotten? How do we deal with physical evidence of the past? Are we able and confident to engage, converse, and interpret? How do we tell difficult stories and help people engage with them?

*You can find the full report, including news from the General Assembly on the apology via the Church of Scotland website.*

# St Stephen's For Sale!

**Now a cool £3m, we look back on our links with St Stephen's**

The grand, domineering building of St Stephen's Centre guards the east side of Stockbridge, is often used as a backdrop for period features, and now is on the market for £3,000,000.

The building itself was built in 1827-28 to a design by William Henry Playfair, and the first minister there, William Muir, opened an evening school in the large, vaulted cellars to educate the illiterate. As the congregation began to decline, St Stephen's formed a union with us (when we were named St Bernard's), and by 1992 we had merged, and renamed ourselves Stockbridge Parsh Church. While worship continued here, St Stephen's was used as halls and a community centre, until 2012, when it was handed back to the General Trustees.

In June 2014, video game producer Leslie Benzies announced a deal to purchase the building for over £500k; planning to preserve the church and create a trust of members from the community. In 2017, however, this fell through, and in the July of that year the building was purchased from the Benzie's Foundation by Peter Schaufuss. Schaufuss, a ballet dancer and founder of the English National Ballet School, stated that

he intended to make the Great Hall “a world-class theatre, one that will attract productions from leading companies from around the world”. Most famously, it hosted Sir Ian McKellen in a production of Hamlet at the Fringe in 2022.

Looking back to the 1990s when the congregations merged, we have a wealth of memories:

**These ladies across the way, oh they must have been born in the 1800s, they used to rent out their rooms to people visiting Edinburgh, and they had this piano. Chopin played on that piano, and when they passed away they left it to St Stephen’s as that is where they went to church.**

**I remember we had this minibus – it was useful and we could get everywhere with it, but it was always so grumpy when trying to start!**

**On New Years, we used to take up May (who was 90 odd years old at the time) all the way up the wooden steps in the tower so we could watch the fireworks. There was plenty of snacks, and super jumpers!**

You can find details of the sale, including photos, floorplans and more via Culverwell’s at [St Stephen’s Edinburgh](#)

## Venue #317

### What's on at Stockbridge Church during the Fringe?



We've got an eclectic mix of events ahead — opera, left-handed pianos, a love letter to Leicester City FC, choir workshops, gospel retold from memory, and a generous run of Recitals for Wrigglers.

Keep your eyes peeled for our printed programme, and in the meantime, you can see events both on our website's 'Whats On' page, as well as on the Fringe website: [Stockbridge Church - Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

# Aria Alba - Opera for All Cavalleria Rusticana / Pagliacci

*Opera, Classical*

Edinburgh's leading community opera presents the classic double bill. Jake Zualski's new production, under musical leadership of RCS graduates Suzanne Godet and Max McWirther, recontextualizes these stories of love and betrayal for first-timers and seasoned fans.

**Aug 12-15** 19:00 (3h), £22.00 (£16.00)

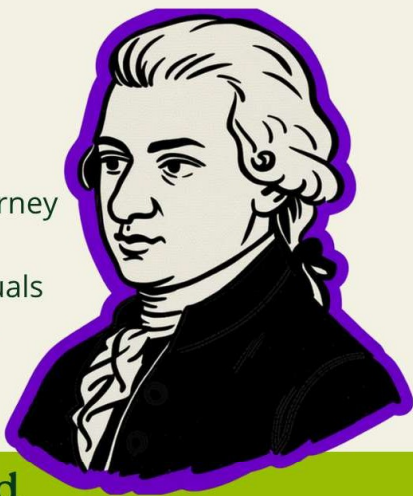


## Grace Art Studio Code of Grace

*Classical, Live music*

A classical crash course through live music. Journey through classical music's greatest eras, from Baroque to modern. Live performance and visuals bring the evolution of sound to life, for curious newcomers and seasoned listeners alike.

**Aug 9** 16:00 (1h), £10.00 (£8.00)



## Christopher Seed Improvisations on a Left- Handed Piano

*Contemporary, Classical*

With the world's first left-handed piano, Chris creates a unique blend of improvisations: combining his 1826 mirror fortepiano with a modern electronic keyboard.

**Aug 20-21** 17:30 (40m) £15.00 (£10.00)  
(£20.00F)





## Fischy Music Christian All-Age Concert

*Music*

Fischy Music, much-loved by children and adults, bring their unique blend of hopeful and fun-filled songs. Led by Fischy musicians, this family-friendly sing-along features an uplifting collection of Christian faith-based favourites. BSL interpreted performance.

**Aug 8** 11:00 (1h) £10.00 (£7.00) (£30.00F)

## Children's Choir Workshop

*Workshop, Music*

A unique opportunity for children aged 8-12 to join Fischy Music on stage. Learn songs, actions and performance skills and sing in the Fischy Children's Choir at the 3pm concert. Incl concert entry.

**Aug 8** 13:30 (1h), £15.00

## Children's Choir Concert

*Music*

Relaxed performance joined by the Fischy Children's Choir. Led by Fischy musicians, this family-friendly sing-along will feature many Fischy favourites. BSL interpreted.

**Aug 8** 15:00 (1h) £10.00 (£7.00) (£30.00F)



## Chris Matthewman Win Loss Draw

*Spoken word, Storytelling, Song*

A celebration of football, family and keeping the faith. Frank is forty and caring for dad.

Times are tough, but they're both lifelong Leicester fans and about to witness one of the greatest sporting underdog stories ever.

**Aug 17-21** 20:00 (1h30m) £10.00 (£8.00)



**Kim Edgar**

## Singing Workshop

*Choral, Acoustic*

Form a choir to sing uplifting songs in Kim Edgar's Songs of Unity concert (7-9pm) featuring Kim's own acclaimed songs and favourites from other songwriters.

All welcome! BYO lunch, and please ensure you are also able to attend the concert later from 7-9. No sight-reading required.

**Aug 29** 11:30 (5h30m), PWYC £20.00 +

## Songs of Unity

*Acoustic, Choral*

Acclaimed songwriter Kim Edgar performs uplifting songs of unity: her own, and her favourites from other songwriters. For some songs, Kim will be joined by a choir.

**Aug 29** 19:00 (2h), PWYC - £12 +

## Errol McGlashan / Word On The Kerb Whoever Has Ears To Hear

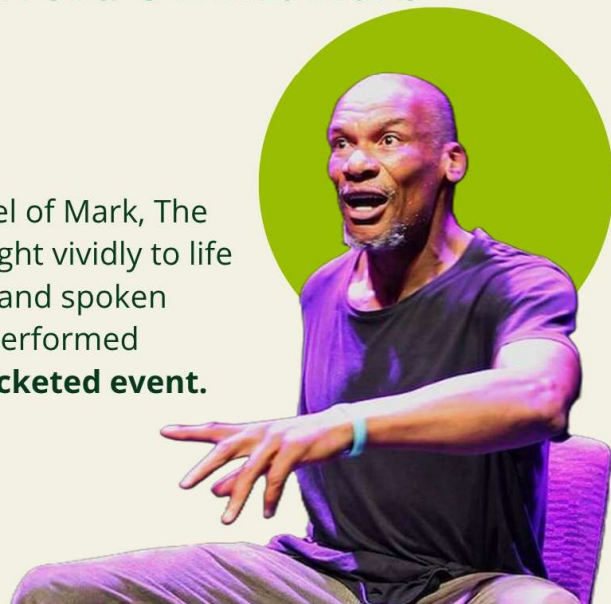
*Storytelling, Solo show*

A dramatic recital of the Gospel of Mark, The Greatest Story Ever Told, brought vividly to life by South London-based actor and spoken word artist Errol McGlashan. Performed entirely from memory. **Free ticketed event.**

**Aug 9** 17:45 (1h30m)

**Aug 10** 12:45, 14:45 (1h30m)

**Aug 11** 11:45 (1h30m)



# The Lion and the Mouse

**Aug 8,10,13-15** 10:30 (35m)

**Aug 12** 13:00 (35m)

**Aug 13-15** 14:00 (35m)

**Aug 9,16** 14:30 (35m)

£12.00 (£8.00) (£36.00F)

# Wriggle Around the World

**Aug 8,10,13-15** 12:00 (35m)

**Aug 12** 15:00 (35m)

**Aug 13-15** 15:30 (35m)

**Aug 9,16** 16:00 (35m)

£12.00 (£8.00) (£36.00F)

## Wrigglers After Dark!

*Classical, Acoustic*

Following their five-star review, this violin and cello duo return with their evening of stories about composers and their misdemeanours! **16+**

**Aug 8** 21:00 (1h)

£15.00 (£10.00)

Fun, interactive &  
educational shows for babies  
& toddlers where wriggling is  
allowed!

# Recitals for Wrigglers



# Music Hub Events

July to September

Stockbridge Music Hub  
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church  
*presents*

## Hannah Rarity



**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July 6pm**

Stockbridge Church, 7b Saxe Coburg St, EH3 5BN

**Tickets on the door or via [www.musichub.uk](http://www.musichub.uk)**

**Saturday 18th July 6pm**

*Hannah Rarity*

The return of a Music Hub staple! Hannah is known for her folk music, especially her voice, and her stage presence. Whether you're a fan or just curious, it's the perfect chance to experience her unique sound.

## **Saturday 25th July 6pm**

*Taylor Wilson*

Bootleg and Bourbon 1920s Speakeasy featuring acclaimed chanteuse Taylor Wilson.

## **Friday 7th August 1pm**

*Shlomy Dobrinsky and Adam Brown*

Dobrinsky is a critically acclaimed violinist, and Brown plays bodhrán and guitar with storytelling at its heart.

## **Saturday 22nd August 6pm**

*R6 Ensemble*

Scottish chamber music group formed by emerging professionals who met as young musicians at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Junior Department, rehearsing together in the legendary "Rehearsal Room 6".

*More information on the Music Hub can be found online via their website: <https://www.musichub.uk/>*

**Our worship continues on Sundays at 11am in person, and livestreamed  
online via our YouTube channel.**

You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and on our website

*[www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk](http://www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk)*

**Come and join us! All are very welcome.**

